

not engage in negative attacks, but rather constructive dialogue in order to see this come to a fruition.

FARM SECURITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, today the House of Representatives passed an important measure that was part and parcel my reason for coming to the United States Congress. Today, this Congress passed a farm bill, meeting an obligation that comes upon us in this Chamber every 5 years to pass a measure that will protect farmers while making the right investment and contribution to conservation in America.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to tell the Hoosier farmers that I serve all across eastern Indiana that the Farm Security Act and the passage of that Act in this Chamber today ought to be a source of encouragement and enormous pride to them, not because we in this Chamber wrote a farm bill, but because in every sense, farmers and ranchers across the United States of America, for perhaps the first time, truly wrote farm policy in this country.

In the past 2 years the Committee on Agriculture, of which I am a proud member, held field hearings with agricultural interests across the country, 47 hearings in all, in preparation of a farm bill. Hearings were held over a 16-month period of time on H.R. 2646. There were 368 witnesses who testified before our committee during that 16-month period.

The vision of the chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST), to ask commodity groups and organizations and farm groups across the country to come before our committee and actually offer their own version of a farm bill was, to say the least, visionary.

From my own part, we held nearly a dozen town hall meetings across eastern Indiana in barns and in warehouses and in feed stores, asking farmers who know much better than this Hoosier what ought to have happened in this bill, and they gave us that input. So the first thing I would brag about today is the job that the American farmer and the American rancher did in the preparation of the Farm Security Act.

Mr. Speaker, let us be candid, the passage today was not altogether certain. It was not altogether ensured, with some opposition from the administration to the timing of this bill, and even some opposition from the leadership in both political parties. Those of us who worked hard on this bill knew we had our work cut out for us.

People argued that with USDA projections that net cash farm income in 2001 will achieve record levels that we

did not need a farm bill now. I would argue that given the realities of the farm economy and given the circumstances on the international scene now was precisely the time for the House Committee on Agriculture and the leadership of the House of Representatives to rise to the challenge.

Even the USDA's economists agree that net farm cash income is not a good tool to base farm policies on, that livestock receipts are the driving force for the increase in net cash farm income in 2001, and that affects very few of the farmers that I serve. The increase in crop production expenses more than offsets the increase in crop cash receipts.

Without a new farm bill this year, net cash returns from major field crops would be 5.8 billion lower for 2002 crops than for 2001, and the Farm Security Act that we passed today, of course, does not happen in a vacuum.

I know that some in the national media sneered at those of us who suggested that bolstering the farm economy in America was not a matter of national security. The Wall Street Journal's left column that I usually admire suggested as much earlier this week.

Let me say as we turn our attention in the weeks ahead to Wall Street and to stimulating our economy with a much-needed economic stimulus package, I believe the House Committee on Agriculture, the Democratic and Republican leadership on that committee and the leadership that voted to pass the Farm Security Act today said, before we turn our attention to Wall Street, let us turn our attention to rural Main Street. We have sent a deafening message of strength to the farm economy in America today.

It has been a profound privilege for me as a first term Member of Congress to serve as the only member of the majority from the State of Indiana on the House Committee on Agriculture. It has been a challenging time. I commend, again, the chairman, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. COMBEST) and the ranking member, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM), for their outstanding leadership in forging a bipartisan bill long before bipartisanship was the theme of this Chamber, and I commend all of my colleagues today for putting the interests of farmers and ranchers ahead of the politics of the moment and saying and recognizing that a strong rural America means a strong American economy, and now is the time that all of America be strong as we face the difficult challenges of the days ahead.

THE CALL-UP OF THE RHODE ISLAND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, on September 11 our world changed forever. The United States suffered an attack unlike any the modern world has ever known. Thousands have been lost and will be forever missed by their friends and families. As we mourn this loss, we must find ways to strengthen our national homeland defense and to prevent terrorism both here and abroad.

Critical to meeting this goal will be the brave and dedicated members of our Armed Forces. I rise today to pay my respects to these brave men and women, in particular, the dedicated members of the 143rd Airlift Wing of the National Guard who will be deployed today.

The National Guard has tirelessly served our great Nation since the organization of its first units in 1636 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The Guard fought in Korea, Vietnam, and the Gulf War. During the 1990s, the Guard's role dramatically increased to a total force partner at home and throughout the world. Today, we are relying on the Guard in our airports and communities throughout the country to guard us from a recurrence of what was unthinkable just a short time ago.

Mr. Speaker, we have entered into an era in which homeland defense is a crucial concern for which we rely heavily on our National Guard. These remarkable people stand out among ordinary Americans because they have chosen to give of themselves and help defend our country in times of need.

Many of our National Guard units are being called up and asked to leave their families, jobs and lives behind in order to serve and protect this Nation. From conducting intelligence work to being deployed to high risk regions of the world, these brave men and women will be critical to ensuring our safety here at home.

Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of the 44 members of the 143rd Security Forces Squadron from the Rhode Island Air National Guard who were called up to active duty. They possess a fierce spirit which burns most brightly when it is given direction and purpose, and this is the time, more than ever, to utilize that spirit.

While I take strength in their immense abilities and know that they will help ensure America's safety, I look forward to welcoming them all home to Rhode Island very soon.

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DR. SHIRLEY TILGHMAN ASSUMES PRESIDENCY OF PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GUTKNECHT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.